

BEYOND
THE
MOUNTAINS

An Autobiography

Luther Flynn

EARLY EDUCATION

The first summer at our new home was interesting since everything was new -- even the people. I could not get around much because of my crippled knee. However, it recovered enough for me to walk by the time school opened. Several children went from our house that year, so that nearly one-third of the school came from our side of the ridge. There was a dirt road around the ridge, but we usually went across the ridge for it was nearer that way. We carried our lunches, since hot school lunches had not yet come into existence in our territory.

That was an interesting and profitable term of school. Youth who didn't have the ambition to learn did not attend. But a fine group did attend and studied purposefully. We formed friendships there that lasted all our lives, and our desire for learning was increased.

After school was out in the spring, I went to make my headquarters with a family living in the village of Arbovale. It was then that my sister in the other county died and we made our walking trip there. Part of the summer was spent helping nearby farmers, and part of the time I acted as clerk in the little country store in the village. The storekeeper was kind to let me help even though I knew too little about the job. One day a lady came in and asked for muslin. Now I didn't know what "muslin"

I found
was so I told her we didn't have any.
out later my mistake; we did have it.

For the next two terms of school I remained in the village and attended the one-room school there. During the summer between those terms I endeavored to make a little money. I went to a tannery not far away and got a job there. I lived with a family nearby and helped them in their garden and paid them something more for my keep.

The tannery purchased cattle hides and converted them into leather. After the hair was removed from the hides and they were dried there were particles of flesh and rough places that needed to be cut off. I was assigned to trimming leather. This required a very sharp knife and as a result my fingers were often cut and had to be bandaged up.

Later I was put to work on the bark racks to stack bark. The acid secured from certain kinds of bark was used in getting the hair off the hides. This bark was shipped in on freight cars and stacked under sheds until needed. Bark could be peeled from the trees only during a certain season, so it had to be stored for the other parts of the year. After working on the bark racks for a short time I discovered that I could make a little more money helping a farmer make hay, so I changed jobs.

It was while working in the tannery that I opened my first bank account. The deposit, of course, was meager, but being able to write one's own check to pay a bill created a feeling of importance.

The new job was working with the hay on a

large farm approximately five miles long. I was not large and hardly strong enough to do heavy work so I was given the job of driving the side-delivery hay rake. It was not mechanically driven, but pulled by two horses. How do you drive a rake through a gate that is not as wide as the rake? I did most of the raking of the hay and then helped haul some in. Here we built approximately fifty stacks of hay and filled two barns. There is an interesting sidelight. In the center of the farm was a knoll from which you could see both ends of the farm. The elderly man who owned the farm, I am told, requested that he be buried on this knoll so that he could see over his entire farm.

The church at Arbovale was very active with services every Sunday, and Prayer Meeting every Thursday night. I have known a revival to continue every day for four weeks. Sometimes there were three services in one day. The weekly prayer meeting was well attended, and conducted by the lay people. There were many prayers and many testimonies.

Our family lived two miles from the village by a straight line. By road it was much farther. Since we had no means of transportation other than walking, it was the custom to go the nearest way. This led through fields and across fences along a well-beaten path that was traveled by night as well as by day.

In the spring of 1909 a man came to a village not so far away to conduct a normal school. I thought that this might be an opportunity for me to prepare to take the examination to get a teacher's certificate. It was too far away to walk so I found a place with a farmer about a mile and a half away from

the school where I could get board during the school time and then work for the farmer later to pay for my board. This is what I did: I attended the school which lasted about six weeks; then I worked for the farmer cutting brush and doing whatever else needed done to pay for my board. Then later in the summer I went to the county seat and took a state teacher's examination and was awarded a second grade certificate.

Armed with this certificate, at the advanced age of seventeen, I started forth to be a school teacher. I attended the County Teachers Institute which was a week of instruction by professionals provided by the State Department of Education. At this Institute I made the connection that led to a teaching position. One district of the county paid a larger salary than the others, so I secured a school in that district. The salary was \$42.50 a month. The school was a one-room building far out in the country about five miles from a railroad station. To get to my new job meant walking to the train, going by train to the proper stop, then getting off and walking to the school (five miles) or to the boarding place, about six miles.

All the children were taught in the one-room school. It was not in excellent shape, but it provided a very good shelter. The grounds were inadequate and there was no equipment. There was no patron near the school so I boarded at a home beyond a large ridge which we crossed to school in the morning and back in the evening. There were no improved roads. There was a road that could be traveled by wagon or horseback, but to go by road would be a great deal farther than to walk across the ridge. Snow or cold didn't seem to make any difference. School day

came -- we went to school. The attendance of the children was very good though all of them had to walk a considerable distance to get to the school. Parents were very cooperative and treated me kindly. It seemed that the children were interested and learned well that school year. One or two of the children were as old or older than I, but it all seemed to go very well. On the last day of school the children gave a special program of readings, recitations, speeches and songs. All the patrons and many other people were present. It was a very pleasant experience for all concerned.

As I continued teaching and trying to do something for the young people, I realized that I needed more education and training. There was no high school for me to attend so I sought other sources of further education. I came upon the idea of attending one of the six state normal schools. Finally I decided to go to Shephard College State Normal School at Shepherds-town. That school seemed a long way off to me, and upon examination I found that it was necessary to make three or four train changes in order to get there. Of course, that was the day when there were no buses or other ways of travel -- it had to be by train. However, during that winter I was able to save enough money to pay my way to normal school and remain there for the spring term. The school operated on the quarter system. My school got out in time for me to get to the state normal school for the spring term. In this case I remained for the summer term. I experienced what I thought were very good spring and summer terms and made a number of friends. My horizon was considerably widened in different ways.

Some of us students boated on the wide

Potomac River where Fulton operated his first steamboat. We watched mules pull a boat on the Cumberland Canal as they passed through the locks. We visited Harper's Ferry (lowest point in West Virginia) and saw John Brown's fort. We had a Cadet Corps at Shepherd and I finally became the Color Sargeant and carried the flag in the Memorial Services at Antietam Battlefield. A group of us gathered in the school building one morning before daylight and watched Halley's Comet.

Some of us were privileged to take a trip to Washington, D.C. We went by train and arrived at the marvelous Union Station. We took a tour in some kind of car. Among the places we visited were: the zoo, the Navy Yard, the Washington Monument, the Museum; and we drove by the White House. We also went into the Capitol and saw where the House and Senate meet. We saw also the Library of Congress -- a marvelous sight. There was a place on Pennsylvania Avenue called the Three-Cent Lunch. The cost of a meal there was three cents for each dish. The whole experience was exhilarating.

The following year I was asked to come back to the same school, so I returned there for another year and had a good experience teaching in that one-room school through that winter. An interesting incident was a visit by the county's very first district superintendent. I remember the day he came to our school, but he came walking. His overshoes or boots, whatever he wore, were muddy and he was not satisfied with the roads we had and the transportation because the only way he could get about in some sections was by walking. I remember he did not return the next year but found more pleasing circumstances elsewhere. About fifty

years later I met him at an Emeritus Luncheon at Shepherd College. He had retired from being president of a Maryland state college.

At the end of the second year of my teaching I decided again to go back to Shepherdstown. I got there before the winter term closed and got some credit and then stayed for the spring term. I did not stay for the summer term this time.

That summer (1911) I tried to sell books by calling at homes, but my presentation didn't convince people to buy the books. Perhaps I was not sufficiently convinced myself. I didn't have a good enough line of talk to be a good salesman. Later I visited the community where I was born and lived as a boy. Many of the people asked me to teach their school, and after due consideration I decided to do so. The building was a one-room log structure, the same building in which I had started to school when a boy of five. In the front of the room was a section made of boards and painted black, nailed on the wall. This was our blackboard. The seats were "homemade". The children ranged in age from Willie, five, to Dewey, eighteen. This was one of the most satisfying years of my teaching career. There was no rush or hurry, no radio or TV or anything of that sort. There were no improved roads or automobiles and no meetings calling for attendance. The children seemed willing to learn. We were one big family who worked together and played together. I stayed some distance from the school with an uncle and aunt in a log house with a fireplace for heat. I slept in the loft with the boys of the household. I taught for five months at a salary of \$35.00 a month, and I received \$1.35 a month for the janitor work. My board, room, and laundry cost \$25.00 for the school year.

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At the end of the school term I started back to the Normal School. Walking down a long ridge I met a member of the Board of Education. He asked me, "Where are you going?" I said I was going back to school. He replied, "You don't need any more education." However, I went on and finished the spring quarter. Then it occurred to me that if I could work and save some money during the summer, I could go back to school in the fall and stay all year and graduate, and get a first grade certificate.

A lumber camp was located near my father's home so I applied for a job and was assigned to a cutting crew as knot bumper. My job was to cut all limbs off the logs after the trees had fallen, which was more than I could do. At some times the chopper and the cutting crew considered the situation and would help me out. Later on I was given a job of driving grabs. Logs were pulled down off the mountain side by a team of horses. Grabs (metal hooks) were driven into each side of a log, and the grab rings were slipped over projections on the grabs. When it became so steep that the logs would start to gain on the team, the team would jay or turn aside. The rings were supposed to slip off the grabs and let the logs slide on down the hill by itself. I dreaded all the time that I might make a mistake and not drive the grabs properly. If they did not release from the logs they might kill the team. But this never happened and no damage was done. My wages were small but I got my meals at the camp so I was able to save a little money, enough to enable me, by borrowing a bit, to undertake a full year at school. The distance to school was several hundred miles, and I did not go home or anywhere for Christmas vacation because of lack of funds.

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Graduation from a four-year state normal school was for me a memorable occasion. There were thirty-nine students graduating, and perhaps I had more to be thankful for than any other member of the class. In addition to the regular diploma, I received two gold medals: one for "Best Drilled Cadet," and the other for "Senior Honor." I want to express my very deep gratitude to Professor Thomas C. Miller, President of the School, and to all members of the faculty for their gracious treatment and kindnesses throughout my stay there. They were most kind and understood the problems of the students.

What now? I was twenty-one years of age, had taught three terms, had finished a four-year course in a state normal school, and now had a first grade certificate. But I had no particular aim or specific objective toward which to work. The most logical thing seemed to be to teach school. I had no money for any further training just then. So I secured the principalship of a two-room school with eight grades. The County Superintendent of Schools asked me to teach the first year of high school, or ninth grade, in addition to the seventh and eighth grades. I did not know any better than to try it. To say that the year was a success would be fairly charitable. However, the school was not rated as a failure. I found that some ideas gained in a normal school as to methods, etc., didn't always work so well in certain situations.

I still wasn't sure what I should do except to teach. But as there was no opening immediately available, the best thing seemed to be to get some more education and training. After paying some debts I had about \$40.00 left. Could

anyone go to college on that amount? I decided to try. I had heard of a college at Buckhannon, West Virginia, and I decided to go there and see what the situation was. This was a Methodist School and I had joined the Methodist Church.

I arrived in the college town by train one evening into a perfectly strange environment. After inquiring about the location of the college, I got my suitcase and started out. After walking about half a mile, I came up with a man going in the same direction. When I inquired whether this street led to the college, he told me that it did. He then said, "I am going that way and will walk with you." Upon arrival at the edge of the campus, he said he lived there and insisted that I go into the house. I discovered that he was the President of the College. He had me eat supper with them, and then he took me to the college and arranged a place for me to sleep that night. The next day I found a place in town where I could get board and room for \$3.50 a week. There were no men's dormitories. Soon I was registered and had a job working in the college printing plant at eleven cents per hour.

The next year I lived in a room in the administration building as a caretaker of that building, and I acted as agent selling men's tailor-made clothing. Later I was a substitute teacher for the public schools in the town and in this way helped out with my expenses. In my junior year I operated a men's boarding club and thus paid for my meals. I engaged in few physical activities because of the pressure of my schedule, and outside work. However, I was able to carry a regular load and graduate

within three years. I had a very close friendship with other students. In addition to my regular work, I was privileged to be President of our literary society, President of our debating club, Vice-president of the YMCA, and President of our college Sunday School at the Methodist Church.

While much work is involved in a college course, especially when you work your way, there are many things that make college life enjoyable and profitable. Some of these experiences in my case are as follows:

My first roommate was A. F. Shomo. Artie was longer than the bed and I was shorter, but we got along fine. Artie could form a curve and I could sleep within the curve. He became a Methodist minister, and his family and our family have been life-long friends. The second year I moved into a room in the attic of the Administration Building with Humboldt Yokum Clark. He had a sign on the door of our room: "Enter without knocking; remain on the same terms." He and I graduated together. He has been an educator, spending several years on the faculty of Glenville College. We have continued our friendship through the years.

Many other friendships were formed that had an influence on my later life. The most important of these was formed with a young woman, Ada May Spencer, who was preparing for a life of Christian service. After three years of friendship we were married in her home in 1918, and have worked together and enjoyed our fellowship until now.

Somehow I found time to make a rowboat and we used it on the Buckhannon River for

outings and picnics when we enjoyed the companionship of close friends.

In many ways I had help along the way. In handling the matter of measuring for men's suits and ordering them, I had the help of Edward Rowland, Treasurer of the College. When I was conducting the boarding club, Mrs. Maude Mick helped us by cooking and permitting us to use her dining room. Various members of the faculty very graciously excused me from class when I had opportunity to teach in public schools. Ada was very kind and helped in grading children's written work for me.

One of the finest men I have known, and who helped me much was Boyd Randal. He was one of my teachers when I attended Shepherd College State Normal School. He and I left Shepherd about the same time but we remained friends. After being in college for a while, I found there were times when a student needs a little money. Professor Randal was in public school work. He wrote me that if I got in a tight place to let him know. He never failed to help when I was in need, and never charged interest. All debts were paid as soon as possible.

In the summer of 1916 I decided to sell books hoping to make some money for my senior year. But this effort was soon cut short by the necessity for an appendectomy. I returned to Buckhannon for the operation which occurred July 4, 1916. The surgeons' fees plus two weeks in the hospital cost me a total of \$50.00. This did not have to be paid immediately. I was unable to do any work so I went home for convalescence. This seemed to necessitate at least a break in my pursuit of a college education

so I wrote to the President of the college and said that forming him of what had happened and said that I could not afford to go back next year. His reply was, "You can't afford not to go back to school next year." This president was Dr. Wallace B. Fleming who had a great heart full of compassion and a sympathetic understanding for the problems of the poor mountain youth who was trying to get some education and to find out what was beyond the mountains. With this encouragement and the belief that this was God's will, I returned to college and was able to graduate the following commencement.

During my college years there was a great missionary movement among some churches and college students. One of the most widely-known missionaries was John R. Mott who had as a motto "Evangelism of the world in this generation!" As a result of this missionary zeal a Student Volunteer Movement was organized in many colleges. I became interested in the Movement, and for one year was State President of the Student Volunteer Movement in West Virginia. Ada Spencer was the Secretary. We became engaged and volunteered for work in Africa.

However, I felt the need of adding to my finances. I was offered a position on the faculty of West Liberty State Normal School which seemed very desirable. I accepted the position and Ada remained as a student at Wesleyan. The year at West Liberty was very pleasant as well as profitable financially.

In the spring of 1918 we were invited by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church to a conference in New York City. We were housed for a week or more in

the buildings of White's Bible School and had some classes there.

At this Conference plans were made looking toward the Mission Field. We were to go to Hartford School of Missions until an opportunity opened for us in Africa. In the light of this situation we were married. But as often happens, plans are subject to change. The opportunity to go to Africa did not open. Since this situation came late there seemed to be nothing else to do but go on to Hartford, but because of the uncertainty of the situation I enrolled in the Hartford Theological Seminary instead of the School of Missions. Ada's father was not well so she remained in his home and taught school near by.

The school situation in Hartford was favorable. The professors were excellent. All went well until one day while I was in class a telegram was brought to me. It read: "Daddy (Ada's father) passed away last night." The only thing for me to do was to go home to Ada and the family immediately. This I did and remained there for nearly three weeks. During this time I debated the problem of returning to school, but finally went back and resumed my classes. By diligent application I was able to complete a year of seminary work.

I would like to pay tribute to the faculty and administration of Hartford Theological Seminary for their kind and generous treatment. I was awarded a scholarship and permitted to work for the additional expenses. These, with a prize in Hebrew, enabled me to pay all expenses for the year with enough left for my train fare home.

Part of the summer was spent working at home on the farm while pondering what to do next. Before long there came an opportunity to teach in the coal field of southern West Virginia. Here we spent a somewhat difficult but fairly profitable year. I was principal and Ada was a teacher in the same school. We gained experience which would help us in our later work.

Here we were in a coal mine field where men worked inside the hills and mountains. The men who did the work were of different races, different nationalities, different cultures. All the houses and grounds were owned by the coal company. There was no union of coal miners, so the company had control of operations. Our work in the school went well. We were provided a house with no rent to pay. Once we both came down with the flu at the same time. The company doctor provided medical treatment, and his good wife ministered to our needs. We were well treated by our staff and people.

At the close of the school we returned to the farm for the summer. While there the local Board of Education asked me to teach in the local high school and act as Secretary to the Board of Education. Here among the rural people of West Virginia we established our first home, and our first baby was born. We enjoyed the friendship and fellowship of the good people and could have continued here. But in our hearts was a longing for something else. So at the end of four years, I resigned and we departed on a new venture. Our stay in Hillsboro is described in the next chapter.

HILLSBORO

Our years at Hillsboro were both pleasant and profitable. We made many friends and learned more of life. Each of our four years there was very much like the others. So I will mention the details of one year, quoting some things from a very limited diary which I had on my desk. These incidents follow the calendar year rather than the school year.

We began with January 1, a typical Sunday. I usually attended the local church and taught a Sunday School class. Then in the afternoon I visited some other church or Sunday School, trying to do something of value that would help to improve their attendance.

In my diary I had written, "built fires, got wood, cold winter, taught Sunday School class, folks were at our house for a meal. I wrote to friends and relatives, did some reading, and of course, some thinking of the future." Our house had no heating system in it. It was in the edge of the village and similar to what you would expect to find in a rural area. Someone had to get up in the morning and build fires --- usually some wood was brought in the evening before. Either wood or coal could be burned in our stoves, but we used mostly wood.

A note for another morning reads, "fixed bees, made door for chicken window." This shows we had bees and chickens and wanted to

treat them as well as we could. We also had a cow and some other things that go along with rural living. For instance, I see another note that says "set posts." We wanted a nice fence around the place; we owned several lots and we built a fence between our yard and garden. One notation says that Christmas tree was set out in the yard. We wanted trees --- some bearing fruit and some ornamental, such as the Christmas tree.

One diary entry says, "baby's birthday." As a matter of fact, January 6 was the first anniversary of his birth. He was not a large baby when he was born, but developed very well. At one year of age he could walk and weighed twenty-four and one quarter pounds. We were proud of him and loved him very much.

One notation in the diary reads, "To Marlinton to Sunday School Convention." This was a regular meeting of the Sunday School organization. I attended state organizations and always, as near as possible, attended the meetings of the county Sunday School Convention. The regular meetings were usually held on Saturday so more people could get there. At this meeting we organized our plan of action for the year: we would have regular meetings, we would gather information from each local group, and we would make plans to help all the schools remain open all year. These Sunday School meetings continued quite regularly and members of the organization were very interested and concerned.

Another quotation reads, "got a load of coal." It was good to have some coal on hand in case we ran out of wood. In one place in my diary I had written "bag of flour." In

those days, instead of getting a five-pound bag of flour, we usually bought a twenty-five pound bag, and did our own baking. The stores didn't carry many baked goods.

One day there was a murder upon the mountain. That excited us somewhat, of course. It was said that moonshine or drunkenness was back of it. Another day I had noted that we got a gallon of oil. In rural areas there were no lights except oil lights. Often we bought more than one gallon of oil at a time. I see that we also got some oyster shells that day. This may sound strange, but the shells were good for the chickens. The shells that they ate enabled them to grind up the corn they had eaten, so it could be digested.

On another day we had a meeting of the Lyceum Committee. This group was made up of the high school teachers and students who selected a series of programs and lectures to be presented on five or six occasions during the school year as the Lyceum Course. I was a member of the Committee and helped select the events. I noted in my diary the day we came to the end of the first semester --- also, that several students "flunked". Perhaps nowadays there are no flunks, but there were then. There were high standards of grading, and students who would not work were flunked. Of course, if their ability was not so great, teachers would give them additional help until they had achieved some knowledge of their subject.

Until this time the elementary school and high school were both housed in one building. But this building was becoming entirely too small and too crowded. During the school

year the Board of Education and I were making plans to build a new school building, and by summer the plans were completed.

Hillsboro was a little village situated in a large rural area. While we lived there we kept a cow, chickens, pigs, bees, and grew all the things that one could grow in a good-sized garden. So I had quite a few responsibilities at home in addition to my work as a full-time teacher in the high school and Secretary of the Board of Education. On top of all this, our new baby required much time and attention. One notation says, "Up all night, baby is growing a new tooth." Of course when that time comes, babies need your patience, love, and efforts to make things go well.

Now we come to the springtime when we started planting various things in the garden, beginning with peas. It was always interesting to plant different things and watch them grow out of the ground and into vegetables that would be enjoyed by the family. We were seldom able to go to the store to buy vegetables, so practically all the people of Hillsboro grew their own.

Outside on the porch we put up a swing to make things pleasant not only for the family, but also for the very fine neighboring children. I see by my diary that on one day all the wood had been split except the knots which were too tough. If you couldn't get them small enough to put in the stove, you would just have to let them go. One day I was out of feed --- couldn't get any. I don't know just what the reason was, because feed was generally available. We got cottonseed meal, bran and grain of

different kinds for the cows.

On one Sunday I rode horseback to Emmanuel Church. One of my students went with me. We visited two Sunday Schools that day and did what we could to suggest improvements and to keep the Sunday Schools open regularly. It was often better to travel by horseback than to try to go by car because the roads were dirt roads and difficult to get over with an automobile.

One interesting item was that on April 15 we took the stove down. It was good weather and we thought it would be all right without further heat in the house. We made a big mistake! I see that on April 22 I wore my overcoat. We did have some cold days even after April 15. Late in the spring we set out some trees and vines. My diary states that one day we set two apple trees, two maples, blackberries, raspberries, grapevines, and pear trees. We all liked to have a variety of fruits.

On May 22 there was a great deal of excitement in town. An airplane came over and landed in a field just outside the village. The pilot remained there for a couple of days and accommodated people by taking them for rides in the airplane. Many people had never seen a plane and certainly had never ridden in one. The plane was small enough to use an open field for a runway. It appears that two planes were flying east toward Washington, D. C., and one plane went down somewhere east or northeast of Charleston and was lost. The pilot of the second plane landed at Hillsboro to see what he could do to help locate his companion.

State Department of Education came to give the graduation address. The points he made in his speech were interesting to me. There were three main ideas that I thought might be of interest to the youngsters graduating from elementary school and maybe be an incentive for them to go on. The first was, "Whence Came You?" the second, "Where Are You Going?" and the third, "How Are You Going to Live?" I don't know how seriously the children took this or whether they understood it, but it seemed very good to me.

Many people might think a teacher doesn't have much to do in the summertime. I see by my diary that we had strawberries on the day of graduation. Then we set out tomato plants and worked in the potato patch and corn patch. And we did many things around the house such as painting the ceiling of the kitchen and putting sanitas (a washable covering stronger than wallpaper) on the walls. We liked to make our home as attractive as we could. One day my brother-in-law and I went to a neighbor's on the other side of the mountain to pick cherries. We came home with fifteen gallons. At a later time we went to the same place and picked ten gallons of berries, mostly black-berries. Pretty soon we had new beans, new potatoes and apples --- all home-grown --- and they tasted very good.

As the Secretary to the Board of Education, I soon found there was much to do. In preparation for the next school year it was necessary to prepare a budget. First, I determined as near as possible the number of teachers and salary of each. Next, I arrived at the cost of maintenance, janitor work, and new supplies,

by a study of the conditions and needs of each school. Then, after securing the property evaluation of the District from the assessor's office, I could inform the Board of Education what tax levy would be needed to operate the schools. In order to do any new building, a greater tax would have to be levied.

Besides the regular work of keeping the schools open, many other problems came up. One morning in June, I had a meeting with a member of the Board of Education and the contractor who was to erect a new school building. On another occasion the people of a little village on the other side of the mountain wanted the Board of Education to provide them with a new school building at a certain place. This required that some of us investigate the present situation --- see where present buildings were located and measure the roads as they existed. Then we had to estimate the cost of such a building, and check finances to determine whether the present allowable tax rate would permit such an expenditure. This required checking into the Assessor's records and the records of the County Treasurer.

Among other things I was appointed Counting Clerk for the election. Some people today may not know what this means, but then it actually meant counting the ballots cast during the election. There were no such things as voting machines.

Even though the roads were not good, we drove over them occasionally. One day I had a large open car and took a load of people to Knapps Creek to a Sunday School Convention. I went to the Convention that day, spent the night with a neighbor, and then was back the

next day. A large crowd attended dinner on the grounds. Much interest seemed to be shown in what was going on.

I suppose a person should not let a summer go by without a vacation of some sort away from home. So it was that our family and the family of my brother-in-law, Howard Spencer, decided to take a trip to visit my wife's sister and her family in Maryland. Of course today that would be less than a day's trip, but at that time we didn't go very fast. The first day we traveled fifty or sixty miles, according to our plan. But the next day we got all the way to Winchester, Virginia. Howard visited some relatives living near there, while my wife and I stayed at a hotel. The interesting thing about it was that the cost was only \$1.50 apiece for a very nice, comfortable room for those days.

Then we traveled on to Harper's Ferry, Frederick, and through Baltimore to Rising Sun, Maryland. That was a full day's drive. The road was very good from Frederick east --- a two-lane paved highway. Of course the traffic in the city delayed us somewhat. The stay with our folks was very pleasant; we drove around to different places to see new things, especially the churches and the City of Wilmington which seemed to us a rather large city.

Near the end of the week we started home, traveling about the same distance in a day that we did before --- perhaps a little more. We spent the first night with a family who had been our close neighbors many years before. Then we came across through Goshen and Warm Springs, Virginia, and headed on across

the mountains. The road through that way had not been developed as much as it should have, but we thought we were doing very well. When it was nearly dark, just inside of West Virginia, our car stopped and would not go again. Howard knew something about automobiles and decided that the coil had gone bad. Now how could we get another coil? The only one was in Marlinton, probably some fifteen miles away. A country fair was going on in Marlinton and everyone seemed to be going in that direction so I caught a ride into town and found the coil that was needed. I was told that if I waited, somebody would be going back my way from the fair. Well, not knowing the situation as I should have, I waited around at the garage for a ride. It so happened that no one went that way until about ten o'clock. When I got back to the car, I found that the family had finally gone into a nearby house and waited all that time for me. Howard put the coil in the car and we started again on our way.

When we reached Knapps Creek we found that there was a road being built so we had to ford the stream. There were big rocks under the water and we got hung on one and couldn't move. So Howard got out, waded to the bank and somewhere found a team to come and pull us out. We got out, dried off the car a little bit and went on. Before we reached home we had to make another detour. So we were trying all night to get home. We arrived there the next morning about five o'clock.

Soon after we returned from our vacation it was time for the County Teachers' Institute. In those days all teachers went to the county

seat and met together for one week. Educators came in and instructed the teachers for five days. Of course, most teachers went to the

county seat town and boarded there. I had attended previous institutes at Marlinton, West Virginia, and roomed and boarded at a private home. The cost for three meals and bed had been one dollar. But it happened that this week I could go back and forth from home, as we lived only about twelve miles away. This Institute was quite helpful to teachers who were interested in improving their instruction.

High school opened a week after the Institute, so we had one week left to finish our summer chores and put things in good order at home. During this week I did such things as work in the strawberry patch, clean the chicken house, and buy some peaches. I notice that we bought them at fifty cents a bushel. Very good peaches were grown not so far away.

The opening of school that year was not unusual in any way. I see by my diary that I went to Mt. Zion Sunday School and talked to them and persuaded them to stay open at least another quarter.

Soon after school started, a neighbor living across the mountain had an auction sale. My brother, Clarence, who was County Superintendent of Schools, came down and went with me to the sale where we met quite a number of people. Auction sales, particularly in the country, are always very interesting occasions.

Another fall-of-the-year activity was squirrel hunting. Often we went out hunting for a couple of hours after school. Once in

morning and have a better chance to find squirrels. That meant we had to hurry back home in order to be on time at school. The reference to squirrel hunting reminds me of the chestnuts that were in the woods then. The trees had not been killed, so we went out on the mountain and gathered chestnuts. On a trip like that we might find some strawberries and some ripe blackberries too which grew on the side of the mountain.

It was the eleventh of October before we had any heat in the school building. One interesting school activity was what we called a reading circle. Teachers from one district met in one of the schools and discussed books, poems, and conducted other literary activities. It would usually turn out to be quite informative.

One of the highlights of our school year was a State Education Association meeting in Charleston where teachers from all over the state assembled. I was committed to attend. There were lectures, banquets, and sometimes the teachers divided into discussion groups according to the subjects they taught. I met a lot of my friends, and made a number of new acquaintances. One particular dinner was for Shepherd College where I had graduated some years before. Then we had a banquet for West Virginia Wesleyan College where I had recently graduated. The trip kept me away from school for a week.

During December I see that we gathered cabbage, cut the cornstalks, and stacked them in a shock. Later we shucked the corn, leaving the shucks on the stalks for cow feed. We

harvested potatoes and cabbage and buried them in the garden. When you didn't have a cellar you dug a hole in the ground for your vegetables. You lined it with straw, put in your potatoes, cabbage or whatever you had, covered it with straw, and then put enough dirt over it to keep the vegetables from freezing. This was all done well before Christmas time, before school ended for the holidays.

School closed about December 20 for the Christmas vacation. This was the time of wrapping packages and mailing them out. One Christmas we got together over at Howard's. We had a tree at home for our baby though he didn't seem to appreciate it very much. I suppose he was too young to understand most of our Christmas celebration.

There were always plenty of things to do at home. We had to see about getting wood, and staples for the kitchen. We got scratch feed for the chickens, and feed of various kinds for the other animals. We wanted our home well-supplied before school opened again after Christmas, for we could have the worst weather of the year right after the holidays.

The other years at Hillsboro were similar to this one. We had many friends and appreciated very much the friendship and help we received from them. We still correspond with some and remember many of the good things they did for us at Hillsboro. Our stay there was a bright spot in our lives and will be remembered for all time. We could have stayed on there, but in our hearts was a longing for something else. We were not exactly satisfied with what we were doing. We desired further education, and

we wanted to explore other vocational opportunities. We felt there might be something else we should be doing. While we lived at Hillsboro, I was thinking of the future and trying to plan for it.

In March of the last year of our stay in Hillsboro we were saddened by the passing of Ada's mother, Ann Spencer. She had gone to the hospital in Roncerverte for surgery, and did not recover. She was buried beside the grave of her husband, B. B. Spencer, at White Oak Church near Renick in Greenbrier County, West Virginia. Her going was a great loss to us all.

When we decided to leave Hillsboro, we made plans to go to Drew Theological Seminary at Madison, New Jersey. It seemed to us that we ought to go to Madison ahead of time to try to find a place to live. We decided to make the trip in our Model T Ford. We knew some of the roads were bad, but we thought we could make it all right.

My brother Clarence and my father Myles traveled with us. We started on a Monday and reached the state line by late afternoon. Then we entered a ford on Little Back Creek, hit a rock and stopped. Some men who were nearby pulled our car out of the water, and we discovered a broken axle. What should we do? It was many miles to an automobile supply place so we talked to the men who had helped us to find out if they could think of any way of solving our problem. It turned out that one Young man knew where he could find an axle that would fit our car. It was too late in the evening to go much farther. Some of the men put the axle into the car and we were

permitted to stay all night at a house nearby.

The house was a two-story home occupied by a Mr. Jones and his family. My wife Ada was anxious about the kind of people who lived there, until we heard Mr. Jones having a family prayer downstairs. In his prayer he asked God to bless the strangers within his gates. We felt no need to stay awake any longer because we were sure that these were good people and everything was all right.

The next morning we started early and traveled over two mountains on bad roads. We stopped in Harrisonburg and Winchester, and reached Shepherdstown, West Virginia, by 10:00 p.m. There a former teacher of mine invited us to stay at her home. It was also the home of her mother where I had formerly stayed as a student in the College. It was a pleasure to attend a banquet at Shepherd College the next day, and to visit again the school where I had graduated eleven years earlier.

The next day we were off again, this time going through Baltimore to Rising Sun. There we visited in the home of Rev. C. C. Harris (the husband of my wife's sister) and spent the night. When we prepared to leave the next morning we discovered that the differential in our car was broken to pieces, so we had to stay another day to have the car repaired again. Since the next day was Sunday, we stayed that day also and attended the preaching service conducted by my brother-in-law.

On Monday we finally resumed our journey, traveling through territory we had never seen and driving through cities larger than any we

had ever experienced. We now had good roads, but driving through a city, such as Philadelphia, was new to us. Clarence had hoped to stop in Philadelphia to see a doctor, but as a stranger he didn't know just where to find one, so we proceeded northward. After driving through Clinton and Princeton, we realized that we couldn't reach our destination that day. So the decision was made to camp out --- the whole group of us. All we had to camp in was a Model T Ford! We had a little equipment and the weather was warm, so we got along well and managed to rest some that night. The next day we continued north through Morristown to Madison, New Jersey. Our purpose was to find a room or apartment in which to live after moving there. We expended a great deal of effort, but were not successful in finding what we were looking for. Rooms were scarce and houses were quite expensive. While there, however, we decided to see New York --- my father, Clarence and I. The city was quite impressive. We had never seen anything just like it, but we enjoyed what we saw. It is interesting to observe the reactions of rural people when they get into a city like New York. The tall buildings, the great bridges, the steamboats, and many other things were awe-inspiring to us.

We started home without achieving our purpose, but the experience gained would be helpful to us. We came back through Philadelphia to Rising Sun. My wife Ada decided to stay for a while with Euva, her sister, and to keep our child Paul with her. My father, Clarence and I continued the journey toward home. The first day we drove through Baltimore to Washington. There we used what time we could spare to good advantage. We

visited the Capitol Building, the White House, the Navy Yard, Arlington National Cemetery, Mount Vernon, and saw many other sights that were new to us. We spent the night camping in Potomac Park.

The next morning we drove down to Fredericksburg, a town I had heard about from neighbors who had come from there. Then we went to Orange where we spent another night. The following day was long and very full. After driving through Charlottesville, we found there was a long detour. The detour made its way across the Staunton Turnpike, through much new territory and over many mountains, but we got along fairly well until we neared my father's home. Our brakes wore out and we had no way to get the car down the last mountain. We parked the car by the roadside and walked to my father's home that night. The next day we returned and worked on the car so that it could be handled safely and went home to Hillsboro. After such a long trip there was much to do at home. The car had to be repaired properly, the garden needed attention, and fruit and vegetables needed to be harvested and preserved.

After a few weeks of this kind of life I had a letter from my wife saying that she and Paul would come by train to Charlottesville, so it was necessary to make a trip again through the mountains to meet them. This time, my wife's brother and a neighbor's wife and daughter went with me in the Model T Ford over those same bad roads. The first night we stayed with a family I had known some years before --- the family of Daugherty Harper who lived a few miles north of Goshen, Virginia. This not only provided us with a place to spend the night, but gave us the opportunity to renew old acquaintances.

The next day we went on to Charlottesville and met Ada and Paul. We spent the night there with the family of C. O. Arbogast with whom I had lived some years before in West Virginia.

The following day was a day of business. Ada had her eyes examined and Paul had a check-up at the hospital. It was determined that he needed his tonsils and adenoids removed, and the operation was scheduled for the following day. We spent the night after his operation at the home of a former neighbor in West Virginia, Dr. J. W. Smith. The next morning we started for home. We traveled through Staunton and stopped for supper in the evening at Milboro Springs. Then it was on across the mountains, through Marlinton, and home.

Now we became busy with the garden, with closing up business, and the packing for the journey to a little different way of life. Our preparations were interrupted by a very sad experience. My sister's baby girl of eighteen months became very ill and was taken to the hospital. We made several trips there and back, a distance of about twenty miles each way. The child became gradually worse and finally died. We called for my brother-in-law to bring the car down to Ronceverte. It was a very large seven-passenger open car, and we carried the child in it about sixty miles to its home. This incident, of course, delayed the packing and gave us all very sorrowful and heavy hearts.

We finally began our journey to New Jersey in that old seven-passenger Studebaker. We stopped for lunch the first day in White Sulphur Springs, and again spent the night with our friend in Goshen. The second day we went

through Stanton to Harper's Ferry where we
spent the night. We traveled through Baltimore
the third day and spent the night at Mrs.
Aster's home in Rising Sun, Maryland. There
we made our way on to Madison over the same road
we had traveled earlier in the year. This
ended our journey for two years.